



Newsletter

We see Jesus in everything we do

10th January 2025

office@secfs.org.uk



[@stedwardsfirst.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/stedwardsfirst)

www.stedwardscatholicfirstschool.co.uk

Dear Parents

We are already well into the second week of this year and it has been nice to see so many of you at the gate. For those of you we have missed, a very happy new year to you all!

At our first worship of this New Year, we talked about 'Big Dreams' and not giving up – the children all recognise the importance of trying their hardest and – if the teachers are to be believed then they are putting this into practice in their classrooms!

Thank you!

On behalf of all members of staff, please accept a heartfelt thank you for your cards, gifts and kind words at the end of last term. They are all very much appreciated.

Mass

Canon David joined us for mass this morning to celebrate the start of our new term. It was nice to see some of our parents join us for this calm and reverent celebration.

Admissions

Please be advised that if you are looking for a school place for your child to start in Fledglings (Reception) class in September 2025, your admission application must be into the Borough by the 15th January 2025.

Tech Upgrades!

We are aware that some children may have received new devices over the Christmas period. Whether it's a laptop, phone, tablet, games console or other device

that connects to the internet, there's lots you can do to make sure it's set up safely for your child. There is some really useful advice on the NSPCC website on how to set up parental controls.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

Parental controls can help you to plan what time of day your child can go online and how long for, create content filters to block apps that may have inappropriate content and more.

Parking

Already, so early in the term, I have been contacted by two angry neighbours and residents concerning the apparent disregard of highways laws when parents are dropping off or picking up their children. Please remember that there should be no parking on the yellow or zigzag lines outside the school at any time and nor should any car mount the pavement to park or drop off. Please be considerate of our neighbours and ensure that their driveways are not blocked.

Also, please remember that the staff car park should not be used for parking when unless you have made an arrangement with us. This also applies when picking up after clubs. As at 3.15pm, you must park on Parsonage Lane and walk into school to collect your child. On any given day, we can have up in excess of 200 children leaving the premises at 4.15pm – far too many to have cars manoeuvring in the car park – especially when it is dark and raining!

Lateness

We have more and more children arriving late for the school day – some as late at 9.15am! This is very disruptive not only for all the children in each class and their education but also to the administration of the school. Our phonics sessions are all held first thing in the morning and there are lots of children missing this vital input. With Breakfast Club opening from 7.15am and the school gates opening at 8.30am before the bell rings at 8.45am there is really no excuse for being late. If everyone could aim to be here by 8.30 then, if you are stuck in traffic you will have some spare time!

Attendance

Our aspirational target for school attendance is 97% over the course of the academic year. We are currently achieving about 96% which, although better than the national average, is still below our target. Please also be honest with us about the reasons for your children's absence, it puts them under enormous pressure if you tell us they have been ill and then they return to school with a tan and full of stories about their holiday! Honesty is ALWAYS the best policy – and it sets a good example to the children too!

School Census Day – Thursday 6th October

Every year the Free School Meal Funding (the amount of money given to the school by the Government to cover the free school meals for YR, 1 & 2) is based upon the number of school meals served on a particular date. The more meals – the more money! Our next Census Day is the 16th January. We have swapped Friday's menu for Thursday's so it'll be fish fingers or veggie nuggets and chips on Thursday and curry on Friday. A jacket potato option will be available on both days. Please do consider letting your child have lunch on the 16th – every packed lunch can cost the school budget £400!

Author Visit – Friday 17th January

We are excited to welcome back Hannah Peckham a local award-winning author to complete some workshops and readings with the classes across the school. This will take place on Friday 17th January 2025.

We have added the books to your child's ScoPay account if you would like to take the opportunity to order any of her books that Hannah can sign / dedicate to your child. Hannah is offering a discounted rate of £6.50 per book or 5 for £30. Books will be available to order on ScoPay until 10am Monday 13th January. The books will also be on sale on the day (17th) after school however due to time she will not be able to dedicate or sign books bought on the day.

Unwanted Gifts?

Did you receive some unwanted or duplicate gifts for Christmas? If so, then please consider donating them to the school Friends. They would love to offer a present room again in the future and your unwanted gifts maybe someone else's treasure! Please just send them in with the children and we will pass them on.

Happy Bags Collection Tuesday 21st January

Similarly, if you need to make room in your (or the children's) wardrobes and cupboards, the Friends have organised a Happy Bags collection for the 21st January.

Move to Bluesky

In case you missed it earlier in the week, we have decided to move from X (formally Twitter) to Bluesky. @stedwardsfirst.bsky.social We are not currently able to post the feed on the website as we have previously but we will use it to communicate with you – in the event of a school closure, for example. Please do follow us there – we are a bit lonely at the moment!

Readers Wanted – St Mark’s Church

St Mark's Church is looking for volunteer readers at their family mass on the first Sunday of each month. If you, or your Y3 & 4 children, would be interested in volunteering, please contact Mandy; mandy.mcgovern@yahoo.co.uk or Nisha nishalescott@hotmail.com

Sarah Matthews

Headteacher